

WASHINGTON, D.C. Congressman John W. Olver (D-1st District) today voted against drastic cuts to federal funding for Community Action Agencies (CAAs). Today, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a continuing resolution (H.J. Res. 68) that included a 50 percent cut in federal funding for CAAs. Olver said, "Despite the overwhelming evidence of growing poverty rates and recent images of evacuees from FEMA camps, the House has passed a bill that would cut funding for the very programs that serve the most vulnerable citizens. The continuing resolution provides temporary funding through Nov. 18, 2005 for those federal departments and agencies that have their fiscal year end on September 30. This means that local anti-poverty programs, known as Community Action Agencies, which are funded by the federal government, will lose 50 percent of their funding. For local Community Action Agencies (CAAs), this cut would be devastating.

Joe Diamond, executive director of Massachusetts Association for Community Action, said, "The 50 percent cut in federal funding for CAAs is a disaster. Paul Bailey, executive director of the Springfield Partnership for Community Action, said, "We've been serving the greater Springfield area for over 40 years. The Springfield Partnership for Community Action serves the greater Springfield area.

Kathy McDermott, executive director of the Fitchburg-based Montachusett Opportunity Council (MOC), said, "This cut is a disaster. According to the National Community Action Foundation, CAAs nationwide currently are serving more than 10 million people. A cut in CSBG funding impacts the ability of CAAs to deliver many other programs for the poor and working poor. Olver said, "At a time when our country has been severely impacted by natural disasters, it is extremely

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